THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) A Conference of Education Ministers of States and UTs was held in New Delhi on 22nd and 23rd October, 1998. The main focus of the Conference was to facilitate wider consultation between the Central and State Governments on items concerning education in the National Agenda for Governance, namely, universalising elementary education, eradication of illiteracy, free education for girls, educational upliftment of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, other backward classes and minorities and the qualitative improvement of the educational system as a whole. Some Ministers staged a walk-out during the inaugural session on the issue of Saraswati Vandana, inclusion of recommendations of a group of experts in the agenda, and extension of invitation to the Chairman of a NGO—"Friends of Tribal Society"—to address the gathering. The recommendations of the Group of experts were withdrawn from the agenda items for discussion. The invitation to the Chairman of the NGO was also withdrawn. The important decisions taken in the Conference are given in the Statement (Refer to Statement appended to U.Q. No. 713)

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Scrapping of the Lecture proposed to be delivered by Prof. Amartya Sen

732. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the Report captioned "Amartya a Bore, Let Joshi Take the Floor", published in the "Statesman" dated 14th November, 1998;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Governing Body of Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla has been re-constituted and the newly constituted body has scrapped the name of Prof. Amartya Sen, Noble Laureaut, who was deemed to deliver the prestigious Radhakrishnan Memorial Lecture, some time early next year;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether it is a also a fact that Hon'ble Human Resource Development Minister, has been requested to substitute Prof. Sen; and

(e) if so, the basis and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) On the expiry of its term, the Governing Body of Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla was re-constituted on 20th July, 1998. The Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla has informed that the name of Prof. Amartya Sen did not figure in the Governing Body deliberation on 15.10.1998 regarding the invitation for the delivery of the Radhakrishnan Memorial Lecture. Prof. Sen was earlier invited twice on 28th January, 1987 and 16th October, 1997 to deliver the lecture in September, 1997 and September, 1998 but he declined on both the occasion. The Governing Body has decided to invite Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Minister for Human Resource Development to deliver the 1999 Radhakrishnan Memorial Lecture.

Planning Education Policy/Strategies

733. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister inaugurated, in New Delhi on 22nd October, 1998, the State Education Ministers' Conference which was held to plan the educational policy/strategies for our country;

(b) if so, the details of discussions held and outcome thereof;

(c) whether any concrete programme for our primary education/higher education system was chalked out, indicating allocation of Central funds for such purposes during 1998-99, State-wise, as compared to 1997-98; and

(d) whether India's amendment for incorporation in UNESCO's recent world declaration on "higher education for next century" has been accepted?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Summary of important recommendations is at Statement. (Refer to Statement appended to U.Q. No. 713)

(d) Indian amendments as incorporated in the UNESCO World Declaration on Higher Education are at Statement.

Statement

Important amendments and modifications suggested by India and incorporated in the "World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century; Vision and Action" include the following:

(a) Emphasis on building the future, for which the younger generations will need to be equipped with new skills, knowledge and ideals;

(b) Our concern arising from the profound crisis of values that obliges our society to transcend mere economic considerations and incorporate deeper dimensions of morality and spirituality;

(c) The need to ensure that the values and ideals of culture of peace prevail;

(d) Emphasis on closer relationship between the world of knowledge and the world of work;

(e) The need to make higher education student oriented;

(f) Emphasis on new methods of education which will also imply new types of teaching-learning materials;

(g) New Methods of testing that would promote not only power of memory but also powers of comprehension, skills of practical work and creativity;

(h) Need to evolve "knowledge society" in order to ensure high quality and equitable regulations for access to prevail;

(i) Need to involve both public and private resources for funding of higher education, even when the role of State remains essentials;

(j) The crucial role of UNESCO in promoting international cooperation in the field of higher education and in implementing the World declaration; and

(k) Consideration that should be given to according priority to the implementation of the World declaration in the development of UNESCO's next draft Programme and Budget.

Expenditure on Education

734. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that expenditure on education, by Government of India, as a per cent of GDP, has decreased in the last two years;

(b) what steps are being taken by Government to ensure that this figure is raised to 6%, as is the declared target of this Government; and

(c) whether Government would consider levying an educational cess to raise more funds for primary education?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) The National Agenda of Governance has committed that 6% of the GDP should be spent on education.

वर्तमान परीक्षा प्रणाली

735. **श्री कपिल सिब्बल:**
श्री बरजिन्दर सिंह:

क्या मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि वर्तमान शिक्षा पद्धति के प्रति आम विद्यार्थियों का विश्वास हिलता जा रहा है;

(ख) यदि नहीं, तो वर्ष 1995-96, 1996-97 और 1997-98 के दौरान केन्द्रीय माध्यमिक शिक्षा परिषद द्वारा ली गयी 10वीं एवं 12वीं कक्षाओं की परीक्षाओं के अंकों के पुन: निरीक्षण के लिए कितने आवेदन किये गये थे;

(ग) क्या यह सच है कि विद्यार्थियों एवं उनके अभिभावकों की ओर से काफी समय से मांग की जाती रही है कि मूल्यांकन के पश्चात उत्तर-पुस्तिकाएं विद्यार्थियों को दिखाये जाने की व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिए; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो क्या सरकार पारदर्शिता के सिद्धांत के आधार पर इस दिशा में सुधारात्मक कदम उठायेगी?